



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/707,917	01/23/2004	Peter K. Malkin	YOR920040029US1	1916
877	7590	05/31/2006		EXAMINER
IBM CORPORATION, T.J. WATSON RESEARCH CENTER P.O. BOX 218 YORKTOWN HEIGHTS, NY 10598			LOVEL, KIMBERLY M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2167	

DATE MAILED: 05/31/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/707,917	MALKIN ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Kimberly Lovel	2167

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 January 2004.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 23 January 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-17 are rejected.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

Line 9 of [0020] of the applicants' specification recites "10101030." It is suggested that a hyphen be inserted between 1010 and 1030. This typo occurs multiple times within the specification.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 1, 9 and 11 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 1, line 10 recites "user"s." It is suggested that the double quotation mark be replaced with a single quotation mark.

Claim 9, line 11 recites "user"s." It is suggested that the double quotation mark be replaced with a single quotation mark.

Claim 11 is missing a period after the number 11.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US PGPub 2004/0267625 to Feng et al (hereafter Feng et al).

Referring to claim 1, Feng et al disclose a method for allowing the sharing of social relationships collections (see [0002]) comprising the steps of:

creating a social relationship collection object for a first user that provides access to at least one individual with whom they have a social relationship (see [0100]; [0125]; and [0158] – according to [0100], the publisher, whom is considered to represent a *first user*, uses applications to create resources; according to [0158], a resource is defined as anything which can be shared by users through Internet access; according to [0125], the address card and group sharing models, which are considered to be resources, can be applied to buddy lists; a buddy list is considered to represent a social relationship collection that lists individuals with whom a publisher has a social relationship with);

allowing a second user to retrieve said social relationship collection object (see [0125], lines 3-5 and [0128], lines 1-7 – a member/subscriber is considered to represent a *second user*; a member/subscriber is able to view an address card; according to

[0125], lines 3-5, the address card and group sharing models can be applied to a “buddy list”); and

as a result of allowing said second user to retrieve said social relationship collection object, said second user inspects a reference contained in the first user's social relationship collection object (see [0074]-[0077] – after a member receives the resource, the member can perform the operations of reading and writing on the resource; reading a “buddy list” is considered to represent inspecting a reference contained inspecting a reference).

Referring to claim 2, Feng et al disclose the method of claim 1 further comprising the step of providing said social relationship collection object as a user list (see [0125] – a “buddy list” is considered to represent a user list of social relationships).

Referring to claim 9, Feng et al disclose a method for hosting a service that allows for the sharing of social relationships collections (see [0002] and [0072], lines 1-5) comprising the steps of:

creating a social relationship collection object for a first user that provides access to at least one individual with whom they have a social relationship (see [0100]; [0125]; and [0158] – according to [0100], the publisher, whom is considered to represent a *first user*, uses applications to create resources; according to [0158], a resource is defined as anything which can be shared by users through Internet access; according to [0125], the address card and group sharing models, which are considered to be resources, can be applied to buddy lists; a buddy list is considered to represent a social relationship collection that lists individuals with whom a publisher has a social relationship with);

allowing a second user to retrieve said social relationship collection object (see [0125], lines 3-5 and [0128], lines 1-7 – a member/subscriber is considered to represent a *second user*; a member/subscriber is able to view an address card; according to [0125], lines 3-5, the address card and group sharing models can be applied to a “buddy list”); and

as a result of allowing said second user to retrieve said social relationship collection object, said second user inspects a reference contained in the first user's social relationship collection object (see [0074]-[0077] – after a member receives the resource, the member can perform the operations of reading and writing on the resource; reading a “buddy list” is considered to represent inspecting a reference contained inspecting a reference).

Referring to claim 10, Feng et al disclose the method of claim 1 further comprising the step of providing said social relationship collection object as a user list (see [0125] – a “buddy list” is considered to represent a user list of social relationships).

Referring to claim 17, Feng et al disclose an apparatus for use in a computer services environment (see [0002] and [0097], lines 13-14 – a user's personal computer is considered to represent the apparatus), said apparatus comprising:

at least one processor (see [0097] – a personal computer is considered to represent a processor) operative to create a social relationship collection object for a first user that provides access to at least one reference with whom they have a social relationship (see [0100]; [0125]; and [0158] – according to [0100], the publisher, whom is considered to represent a *first user*, uses applications to create resources; according

to [0158], a resource is defined as anything which can be shared by users through Internet access; according to [0125], the address card and group sharing models, which are considered to be resources, can be applied to buddy lists; a buddy list is considered to represent a social relationship collection that lists individuals with whom a publisher has a social relationship with), allow a second user to retrieve said social relationship collection object (see [0125], lines 3-5 and [0128], lines 1-7 – a member/subscriber is considered to represent a *second user*; a member/subscriber is able to view an address card; according to [0125], lines 3-5, the address card and group sharing models can be applied to a “buddy list”), and as a result of allowing said second user to retrieve said social relationship collection object, said second user inspects a reference contained in the first user's social relationship collection object (see [0074]-[0077] – after a member receives the resource, the member can perform the operations of reading and writing on the resource; reading a “buddy list” is considered to represent inspecting a reference contained inspecting a reference).

Referring to claim 18, Feng et al disclose a method for allowing a first organization to enable a second organization to use social relationship collection objects of the first organization (see [0002] and [0020], lines 1-4 – a publisher is considered to represent the *first organization* and the subscribers are considered to represent a *second organization*), the method comprising the steps of:

determining the number of users in the second organization that would be using the social relationship collection objects of the first organization (see [0024] – selecting

people to send the collection to from the address book or buddy list and adding them to the e-mail is considered to represent *determining the number of users*),

configuring and installing a server at the first organization to handle requests from the users of the second organization (see [0097] – the agents), and

ensuring the all relevant members of the second organization have a client application for accessing the server (see [0097] – the agents are installed on personal computers of the clients).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 3-4 and 11-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US PGPub 2004/0267625 to Feng et al as applied respectively to claim 2 and 10 above, and further in view of US Patent No 6,549,912 to Chen (hereafter Chen).

Referring to claim 3, Feng et al disclose the step of providing a social relationship collection object as a user list. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of associating said user list with a meta-tag. Chen et al disclose a method for file sharing. In particular, Chen et al disclose the step of associating said user list with a meta-tag (see abstract, lines 2-6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to associate a file with metadata as mentioned in Chen with the user list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a tool for determining a particular view of the user list (Feng et al: see [0012]).

Referring to claim 4, the combination of Feng et al and Chen (hereafter Feng/Chen) discloses the method of claim 3 further comprising the step of automatically modifying the meta-tag when retrieved by said second user (Chen: see abstract, lines 9-14 – when the file is rented the meta-tag is automatically updated; the concept of renting the file is considered to be similar to the concept of sharing a user list).

Referring to claim 11, Feng et al disclose the step of providing a social relationship collection object as a user list. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of associating said user list with a meta-tag. Chen et al disclose a method for file sharing. In particular, Chen et al disclose the step of associating said user list with a meta-tag (see abstract, lines 2-6).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to associate a file with metadata as mentioned in Chen with the user list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a tool for determining a particular view of the user list (Feng et al: see [0012]).

Referring to claim 12, Feng/Chen discloses the method of claim 3 further comprising the step of automatically modifying the meta-tag when retrieved by said second user (Chen: see abstract, lines 9-14 – when the file is rented the meta-tag is

automatically updated; the concept of renting the file is considered to be similar to the concept of sharing a user list).

8. Claims 6-7 and 14-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US PGPub 2004/0267625 to Feng et al as applied respectively to claim 1 and 15 above, and further in view of US 2004/0148346 to Weaver et al (hereafter Weaver et al).

Referring to claim 6, Feng et al disclose a method for allowing the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing meta-tags that indicate the type of relationship between the first user and at least one reference within said social relationship collection object. Weaver et al disclose the features of a buddy list window. In particular, Weaver et al disclose the step of providing meta-tags that indicate the type of relationship between the first user and at least one reference within said social relationship collection object (see Fig 1 – items 111, 112, and 113 are considered to represent the meta-tags since Buddies, Co-workers and Family indicate the type of relationship between the first user and the reference; item 115b is considered to represent a reference that has a relationship categorized as Buddies).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the features of a buddy list mentioned in Weaver et al with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide organization to the buddy list of Feng et al.

Referring to claim 7, Feng et al disclose a method for allowing the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing a meta-tag for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object. Weaver et al disclose the features of a buddy list window. In particular, Weaver et al disclose the step of providing a meta-tag for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object (see Fig 1 – items 111, 112, and 113 are considered to represent the meta-tags since Buddies, Co-workers and Family indicate the type of relationship between the first user and the reference; item 115b is considered to represent a reference that has a relationship categorized as Buddies).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the features of a buddy list mentioned in Weaver et al with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide organization to the buddy list of Feng et al.

Referring to claim 14, Feng et al disclose a method for hosting a service that allows for the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing meta-tags that indicate the type of relationship between the first user and at least one reference within said social relationship collection object. Weaver et al disclose the features of a buddy list window. In particular, Weaver et al disclose the step of providing meta-tags that indicate the type of relationship between the first user and at least one reference within said social relationship collection object (see Fig 1 – items 111, 112, and 113 are considered to

represent the meta-tags since Buddies, Co-workers and Family indicate the type of relationship between the first user and the reference; item 115b is considered to represent a reference that has a relationship categorized as Buddies).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the features of a buddy list mentioned in Weaver et al with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide organization to the buddy list of Feng et al.

Referring to claim 15, Feng et al disclose a method for hosting a service that allows for the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing a meta-tag for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object. Weaver et al disclose the features of a buddy list window. In particular, Weaver et al disclose the step of providing a meta-tag for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object (see Fig 1 – items 111, 112, and 113 are considered to represent the meta-tags since Buddies, Co-workers and Family indicate the type of relationship between the first user and the reference; item 115b is considered to represent a reference that has a relationship categorized as Buddies).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the features of a buddy list mentioned in Weaver et al with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide organization to the buddy list of Feng et al.

9. Claims 5, 8, 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US PGPub 2004/0267625 to Feng et al as applied respectively to claim 1 and 15 above, and further in view of US PGPub 2005/0015432 to Cohen (hereafter Cohen).

Referring to claim 5, Feng et al disclose a method for allowing the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing meta-tags for said social relationship collection object for indicating when a given reference within said object was used. Cohen also discloses a method for sharing a social relationship collection (see abstract). In particular, Cohen discloses the step of providing meta-tags for said social relationship collection object for indicating when a given reference within said object was used (see [0116], lines 1-5 – data points representing contacts may be arranged to identify the most frequent links; color codes can then be applied based upon recency of use; color codes are considered to represent *meta-tags*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the feature of color coding to indicate when a reference was last used as mentioned in Cohen with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a tool to determine the last time the first user utilized the reference (Feng et al: see [0006], lines 7-11).

Referring to claim 8, Feng et al disclose a method for allowing the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing usage history for at least one reference within said social relationship

collection object. Cohen also discloses a method for sharing a social relationship collection (see abstract). In particular, Cohen discloses the step of providing usage history for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object (see [0054] – the frequency of communication is considered to represent the *history of usage*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the feature of providing usage history mentioned in Cohen with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a tool to determine how often the first user utilized the reference (Feng et al: see [0006], lines 7-11).

Referring to claim 13, Feng et al disclose a method for hosting a service that allows for the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing meta-tags for said social relationship collection object for indicating when a given reference within said object was used. Cohen also discloses a method for sharing a social relationship collection (see abstract). In particular, Cohen discloses the step of providing meta-tags for said social relationship collection object for indicating when a given reference within said object was used (see [0116], lines 1-5 – data points representing contacts may be arranged to identify the most frequent links; color codes can then be applied based upon recency of use; color codes are considered to represent *meta-tags*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the feature of color coding to indicate when a reference was

last used as mentioned in Cohen with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a tool to determine the last time the first user utilized the reference (Feng et al: see [0006], lines 7-11).

Referring to claim 16, Feng et al disclose a method for hosting a service that allows for the sharing of social relationship collections. However, Feng et al fail to explicitly teach the further step of providing usage history for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object. Cohen also discloses a method for sharing a social relationship collection (see abstract). In particular, Cohen discloses the step of providing usage history for at least one reference within said social relationship collection object (see [0054] – the frequency of communication is considered to represent the *history of usage*).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the feature of providing usage history mentioned in Cohen with the buddy list mentioned in Feng et al. One would have been motivated to do so in order to provide a tool to determine how often the first user utilized the reference (Feng et al: see [0006], lines 7-11).

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- US PGPub 2005/0154698 to Ikezawa et al titled “Presence Data Management Method”

- US PGPub 2005/0021750 to Abrams titled “System, Method and Apparatus for Connecting Users in an Online Computer System Based on Their Relationships within Social Networks”

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kimberly Lovel whose telephone number is (571) 272-2750. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 - 4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Cottingham can be reached on (571) 272-7079. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Kimberly Lovel
Examiner
Art Unit 2167

kml
23 May 2006



JOHN R. COTTINGHAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

[Signature] 26 May 2006